

SHORT STUDIES IN
ENGLISH LITERATURE

N^o 8

SHORTER
POEMS

WORDSWORTH

पुस्तक दान सभा

भारती भवन प्रयाग ।

पुस्तक दाता का नाम जे० ए० जे० जे०

साहब प्रिन्सपल म्यार लेफ्ट०
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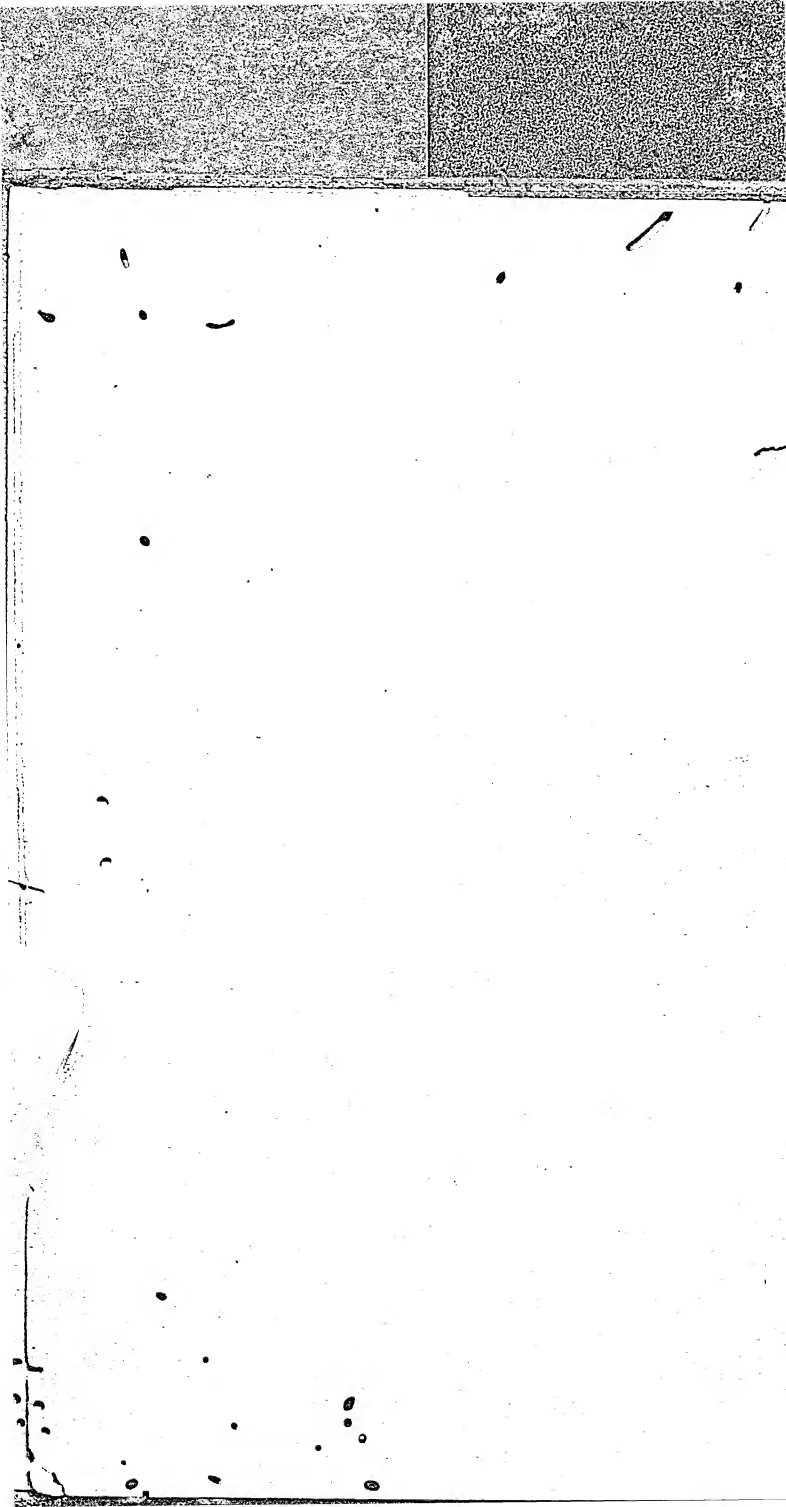
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WORDSWORTH'S SHORTER
POEMS

THE WIND

WHAT way does the wind come? What way does he
go?

He rides over the water and over the snow,
Through wood and through vale, and o'er rocky height
Which the goat cannot climb, takes his sounding flight.

He tosses about in every bare tree,
As, if you look up, you plainly may see;
But how he will come, and whither he goes,
There's never a scholar in England knows.

As soon as 'tis daylight, to-morrow, with me
You shall go to the orchard, and then you will see
That he has been there, and made a great rout,
And cracked the branches and strewn them about.

Hark! Over the roof he makes a pause,
And growls as if he would fix his claws
Right in the slates, and with a huge rattle
Drive them down like men in a battle.

But let him range round ; he does us no harm.
We build up the fire, we're snug and warm ;
Untouched by his breath, see, the candle shines bright,
And burns with a clear and steady light.

Come now, we'll to bed ; and when we are there,
He may work his own will, and what shall we care ?
He may knock at the door—we'll not let him in ;
May drive at the windows—we'll laugh at his din ;
Let him seek his own home, wherever it be ;
Here's a cosy warm house for Edward and me.

WE ARE SEVEN

—A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad :
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
—Her beauty made me glad.

'Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be ?'
'How many? Seven in all,' she said,
And wondering looked at me.

WE ARE SEVEN

9

'And where are they? I pray you tell.
She answered, 'Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

'Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.'

'You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be.'

Then did the little maid reply,
'Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree.'

'You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five.'

'Their graves are green, they may be seen,'
The little maid replied,
'Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

'My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

'And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

'The first that died was little Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

'So in the churchyard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

'And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.'

'How many are you, then,' said I,
'If they two are in Heaven ?'
The little maiden did reply,
'O Master ! we are seven.'

'But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in Heaven !'
'Twas throwing words away : for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, 'Nay, we are seven !'

*ALICE FELL**OR, POVERTY*

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
For threatening clouds the moon had drowned ;
When, as we hurried on, my ear
Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,
I heard the sound,—and more and more ;
It seemed to follow with the chaise,
And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out ;
He stopped his horses at the word,
But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
The horses scampered through the rain ;
But, hearing soon upon the blast
The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
'Whence comes,' said I, 'this piteous moan ?'
And there a little girl I found,
Sitting behind the chaise, alone.

'My cloak !' no other word she spake,
But loud and bitterly she wept,
As if her innocent heart would break ;
And down from off her seat she leapt.

'What ails you, child?'—she sobbed 'Look here!
I saw it in the wheel entangled,
A weather-beaten rag as e'er
From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
It hung, nor could at once be freed;
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
A miserable rag indeed!

'And whither are you going, child,
To-night along these lonesome ways?'
'To Durham,' answered she half wild—
'Then come with me into the chaise.'

Insensible to all relief
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
Sob after sob, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end.

'My child, in Durham do you dwell?'
She checked herself in her distress,
And said, 'My name is Alice Fell;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

'And I to Durham, Sir, belong.'
Again, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong;
And all was for her tattered cloak!

The chaise drove on; our journey's end
Was nigh; and sitting by my side,
As if she had lost her only friend
She wept, nor would be pacified.

THE PET LAMB

13

Up to the tavern-door we post ;
Of Alice and her grief I told ;
And I gave money to the host,
To buy a new cloak for the old.

'And let it be of duffil grey,
As warm a cloak as man can sell !'
Proud creature was she the next day,
The little orphan, Alice Fell !

THE PET LAMB

A PASTORAL

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
I heard a voice ; it said, ' Drink, pretty creature, drink !'
And, looking o'er the hedge, before me, I espied
A snow-white mountain lamb with a maiden at its side.

No other sheep were near, the lamb was all alone,
And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
With one knee on the grass did the little maiden kneel,
While to that mountain lamb she gave its evening
meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper
took,
Seemed to feast with head and ears ; and his tail with
pleasure shook.

' Drink, pretty creature, drink,' she said in such a tone-
That I almost received her heart into my own.

'Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare!
I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.
Now with her empty can the maiden turned away:
But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Towards the lamb she looked; and from that shady
place

I unobserved could see the workings of her face:
If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers
bring,

Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little maid might
sing:

'What ails thee, young one? what? Why pull so at
thy cord?

Is it not well with thee? well both for bed and board?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be;
Rest, little young one, rest; what is't that aileth thee?

'What is it thou wouldst seek? What is wanting to
thy heart?

Thy limbs are they not strong? And beautiful thou art:
This grass is tender grass; these flowers they have no
peers;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears!

'If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen
chain,

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain;
For rain and mountain storms! the like thou needest
not fear—

The rain and storm are things that scarcely can come
here.

THE PET LAMB

15

'Rest, little young one, rest; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned
by none,
And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

'He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee
home:
A blessed day for thee! then whither wouldst thou
roam?
A faithful nurse thou hast; the dam that did thee yearn
Upon the mountain tops no kinder could have been.

'Thou knowest that twice a day I have brought thee
in this can
Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and new.

'Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are
now,
Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the
plough;
My playmate thou shalt be; and when the wind is cold
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

'It will not, will not rest!—Poor creature, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in
thee?
Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor
hear.

'Alas, the mountain tops that look so green and fair!
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come
there;

The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

'Here thou needest not dread the raven in the sky;
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me? Why pull so at thy chain?
Sleep—and at break of day I will come to thee again!'

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat;
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was
mine.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the song,
'Nay,' said I, 'more than half to the *damsel* must
belong,
For she looked with such a look, and she spake with
such a tone,
That I almost received her heart into my own.'

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street,¹ when daylight appears,
Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three
years:

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

¹ Off Cheapside, in the City of London.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees
A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

POWER OF MUSIC

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus !—yes, faith may grow bold,
And take to herself all the wonders of old ;—
Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same
In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there ;—and he works on the crowd,
He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;
He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !
The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ;
The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;
And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the moon brightens round her the clouds of the
night,

So he, where he stands, is a centre of light;
It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,
And the pale-visaged baker's, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'prentice was passing in haste—
What matter! he's caught—and his time runs to
waste—

The newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret,
And the half-breathless lamplighter—he's in the net!

The porter sits down on the weight which he bore;
The lass with her barrow wheels hither her store;—
If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease;
She sees the musician, 'tis all that she sees!

He stands, backed by the wall;—he abates not his
din;

His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,
From the old and the young, from the poorest; and
there

The one-pennied boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a band;
I am glad for him, blind as he is!—all the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a smile.

That tall man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight;
Can he keep himself still, if he would? oh, not he!
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that cripple who leans on his crutch ; like a
tower

That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour !—
That mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the babe in her arms to the sound.

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream ;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for
you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN

WITH AN INCIDENT IN WHICH HE WAS CONCERNED

IN the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old man dwells, a little man,
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry ;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is blooming as a cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo bandied, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices !

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see !
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His master's dead,—and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
He is the sole survivor.

And he is lean and he is sick ;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick ;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village common.

SIMON LEE

21

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.
This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what avails it now, the land
Which he can till no longer ?

Oft, working by her husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
Alas ! 'tis very little—all
Which they can do between them.

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

O reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.

What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it :
It is no tale ; but, should you *think*,
Perhaps a tale you 'll make it.

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock totter'd in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

'You're overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,' to him I said ;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning ;
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

FIDELITY

A BARKING sound the shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox ;
He halts—and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks ;
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern ;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.

The dog is not of mountain breed ;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;
With something, as the shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry :
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height ;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn ¹ below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land ;
From trace of human foot or hand.

¹ A small mere or lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere ;
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past ;
But that enormous barrier binds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The shepherd stood : then makes his way
Towards the dog, o'er rocks and stones,
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;
The appalled discoverer with a sigh
Looks round to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.

INCIDENT

25

The dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This dog had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated traveller died,
The dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side :
How nourished here through such long time
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate.

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG

ON his morning rounds the master
Goes to learn how all things fare ;
Searches pasture after pasture,
Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;
And for silence or for talk,
He hath comrades in his walk ;
Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started !
—Off they fly in earnest chase ;
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race :

HART-LEAP WELL

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the Second Part of the following poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
With the slow motion of a summer's cloud ;
He turned aside towards a vassal's door,
And ' Bring another horse ! ' he cried aloud.

' Another horse ! ' that shout the vassal heard
And saddled his best steed, a comely grey ;
Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third
Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;
The horse and horseman are a happy pair ;
But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,
That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;
But horse and man are vanished, one and all ,
Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as the veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain :
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
—This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;
Sir Walter and the hart are left alone.

The poor hart toils along the mountain side ;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the hart was lying stretched :
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least
Nine roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, 'Till now
Such sight was never seen by living eyes :
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

'I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
And a small harbour, made for rural joy ;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

'A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell !
And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

'And, gallant stag ! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised ;
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

'And, in the summer-time when days are long,
I will come hither with my paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

'Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its harbour shall endure ;—
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure !'

Then home he went, and left the hart, stone-dead,
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
—Soon did the Knight perform what he had said,
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the moon into her port had steered,
A cup of stone received the living well ;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,
Sir Walter led his wondering paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND

THE moving accident is not my trade :
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

HART-LEAP WELL

31

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;
Half-wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
' Here in old time the hand of man hath been.'

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow :—Him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
' A jolly place,' said he, ' in-times of old !
But something ails it now ; the spot is curst.

' You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood, ~
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

'The arbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;
But as to the great lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

'There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

'Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy hart.

'What thoughts must through the creature's brain have
past !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—
—O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

'For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his deathbed near the well.

'Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother's side.

'In April here beneath the scented thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;

And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

‘Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade;
The sun on drearier hollow never shone;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone.’

‘Grey-headed shepherd, thou hast spoken well;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine:
This beast not unobserved by Nature fell;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

‘The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

‘The pleasure-house is dust:—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom;
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

‘She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known;
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

‘One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals,
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.’

THE FORCE OF PRAYER
OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY

A TRADITION

'What is good for a bootless bene?'
With these dark words begins my tale;
And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
When prayer is of no avail?

'What is good for a bootless bene?'
The falconer to the lady said;
And she made answer 'ENDLESS SORROW!'
For she knew that her son was dead.

She knew it by the falconer's words,
And from the look of the falconer's eye;
And from the love which was in her soul
For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods
Is ranging high and low;
And holds a greyhound in a leash,
To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
How tempting to bestride!
For lordly Wharf is there pent in
With rocks on either side.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER

35

This striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore :
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID ?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were
steep ?
But the greyhound in the leash hung back.
And checked him in his leap.

The boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And deep, unspeaking sorrow :
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow.

If for a lover the lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death ;—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow.

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ;
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
And her first words were, ' Let there be
In Bolton, on the Field of Wharf,
A stately Priory !'

The stately Priory was reared ;
And Wharf, as he moved along,
To matins joined a mournful voice,
Nor failed at even-song.

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
That looked not for relief !
But slowly did her succour come,
And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart
That shall lack a timely end,
If but to God we turn, and ask
Of Him to be our Friend !

*SONG**AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE*¹

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE
SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES AND HONOURS OF
HIS ANCESTORS

HIGH in the breathless hall the Minstrel sate,
And Eamont's murmur mingled with the Song.—
The words of ancient time I thus translate,
A festal strain that hath been silent long.

‘From town to town, from tower to tower
The Red Rose is a gladsome flower.
Her thirty years of winter past,
The Red Rose is revived at last;²
She lifts her head for endless spring,
For everlasting blossoming:
Both Roses flourish, Red and White.
In love and sisterly delight
The two that were at strife are blended,
And all old troubles now are ended.—
Joy! joy to both! but most to her
Who is the flower of Lancaster!
Behold her how she smiles to-day
On this great throng, this bright array!
Fair greeting doth she send to all
From every corner of the hall;

¹ Brougham Castle stands about a mile and a half south-east of Penrith.

² Henry, Lord Clifford, deprived of his honours after Towton, lived as a shepherd, but was restored by Henry VII.

But, chiefly from above the board
Where sits in state our rightful lord,
A Clifford to his own restored !

‘They came with banner, spear, and shield
And it was proved in Bosworth-field,
Not long the Avenger was withstood—
Earth helped him with the cry of blood :
St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the land has uttered forth,
We loudest in the faithful North :
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty.

‘How glad is Skipton¹ at this hour—
Though she is but a lonely tower !
To vacancy and silence left ;
Of all her guardian sons bereft—
Knight, squire, or yeoman, page or groom
We have them at the feast of Brougham.
How glad Pendragon²—though the sleep
Of years be on her !—She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough,³ right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream ;

¹ About ten miles from Keighley in Yorkshire.

² About four miles from Kirkby Stephen.

³ About eight miles from Appleby.

And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely Tower :—
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair house by Eamont's side,
This day distinguished without peer
To see her master and to cheer—
Him, and his lady mother dear !

'Oh ! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born—
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die !
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the mother and the child.
Who will take them from the light ?
—Yonder is a man in sight—
Yonder is a house—but where ?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves, and to the brooks,
To the clouds of Heaven she looks ;
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled,
Save a mother and her child !

'Now who is he that bounds with joy
On Carrock's side, a shepherd boy ?
No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
Light as the wind along the grass.

Can this be he who hither came
In secret, like a smothered flame?
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed
For shelter, and a poor man's bread!
God loves the child; and God hath willed
That those dear words should be fulfilled,
The lady's words, when forced away
The last she to her babe did say,
"My own, my own, thy fellow-guest
I may not be; but rest thee, rest,
For lowly shepherd's life is best!"

'Alas! when evil men are strong
No life is good, no pleasure long,
The boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
And quit the flowers that summer brings
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
Must vanish, and his careless cheer
Be turned to heaviness and fear.
'—Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld¹ praise!
Hear it, good man, old in days!
Thou tree of covert and of rest!
For this young bird that is distress;
Among thy branches safe he lay,
And he was free to sport and play,
When falcons were abroad for prey.

'A recreant harp that sings of fear
And heaviness in Clifford's ear!

¹ The father-in-law of the 'shepherd lord.'

SONG

41

I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long,
 A weak and cowardly untruth !
 Our Clifford was a happy youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.
 —Again he wanders forth at will,
 And tends a flock from hill to hill ;
 His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien ;
 Among the shepherd-grooms no mate
 Hath he, a child of strength and state !
 Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee,
 And a cheerful company,
 That learned of him submissive ways ;
 And comforted his private days.
 To his side the fallow-deer
 Came, and rested without fear ;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea,
 Stooped down to pay him fealty ;
 And both the undying fish ¹ that swim
 Through Bowscale Tarn did wait on him ;
 The pair were servants of his eye
 In their immortality ;
 They moved about in open sight,
 To and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which angels haunt
 On the mountains visitant ;
 He hath kenned them taking wing :
 And the caves where faeries sing

¹ These are said by the people of the district to be immortal.

He hath entered ; and been told
By voices how men lived of old.
Among the Heavens his eye can see
Face of thing that is to be ;
And, if men report him right,
He could whisper words of might.
—Now another day is come,
Fitter hope, and nobler doom ;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book ;
Armour rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls ;—
“Quell the Scot,” exclaims the lance—
Bear me to the heart of France,
Is the longing of the shield—
Tell thy name, thou trembling field ;
Field of death, where’er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory !
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored
Like a reappearing star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war !’

Alas ! the fervent harper did not know
That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,

TO A BUTTERFLY

43

The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :
Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth ;
The Shepherd Lord was honoured more and more ;
And, ages after he was laid in earth,
'The Good Lord Clifford' was the name he bore.

'MY HEART LEAPS UP'

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man ;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die !
The child is father of the man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

TO A BUTTERFLY

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
A little longer stay in sight !
Much converse do I find in Thee,
Historian of my infancy !

Float near me ; do not yet depart !
Dead times revive in thee :
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
A solemn image to my heart,
My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time, when, in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly !
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey :—with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush ;
But she, God love her ! feared to brush
The dust from off its wings.

THE SPARROW'S NEST

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid !
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
I started—seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,
The sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
My father's house, in wet or dry
My sister Emmeline and I
Together visited.
She looked at it as if she feared it ;
Still wishing, dreading, to be near it :

TO A BUTTERFLY

45

Such heart was in her, being then
A little prattler among men.
The blessing of my later years
Was with me when a boy :
She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
And love, and thought, and joy.

TO A BUTTERFLY

I've watched you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
And, little butterfly ! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless !—not frozen seas
More motionless ! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours ;
My trees they are, my sister's flowers ;
Here rest your wings when they are weary ;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
Sit near us on the bough !
We'll talk of sunshine and of song ;
And summer days, when we were young ;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

THE REDBREAST AND BUTTERFLY

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,
The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
 Our little English robin ;
The bird that comes about our doors
When Autumn winds are sobbing ?
Art thou the Peter of Norway boors ?
 Their Thomas in Finland,
 And Russia far inland ?
The bird, who by some name or other
All men who know thee call their brother,
The darling of children and men ?
Could Father Adam open his eyes
And see this sight beneath the skies,
He'd wish to close them again.

If the butterfly knew but his friend,
Hither his flight he would bend ;
And find his way to me,
Under the branches of the tree :
In and out, he darts about ;
Can this be the bird, to man so good,
That, after their bewildering,
Covered with leaves the little children,
 So painfully in the wood ?

What ailed thee, Robin, that thou couldst pursue
 A beautiful Creature,
That is gentle by nature ?
Beneath the summer sky

WRITTEN IN MARCH

47

From flower to flower let him fly ;
'Tis all that he wishes to do.
The cheerer thou of our indoor sadness,
He is the friend of our summer gladness :
What hinders, then, that ye should be
Playmates in the sunny weather,
And fly about in the air together !
His beautiful bosom is drest,
In crimson as bright as thine own :
If thou wouldst be happy in thy nest,
O pious bird ! whom man loves best,
Love him or leave him alone !

WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF
BROTHER'S WATER

THE cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun ;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest ;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising ;
There are forty feeding like one !

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,

And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill ;
The ploughboy is whooping—anon—
anon :
There's joy in the mountains ;
There's life in the fountains ;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing ;
The rain is over and gone !

TO THE DAISY

In youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy ;
But now my own delights I make,—
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake
Of thee, sweet Daisy !

Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;
Whole summer-fields are thine by right ;
And Autumn, melancholy wight !
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

TO THE DAISY

49

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane,
Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
Nor grieved, if thou be set at nought :
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wanton zephyrs choose ;
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling.
Thou 'liv'st with less ambitious aim,
Yet hast not gone without thy fame ;
Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
And wearily at length should fare ;
He needs but look about, and there
Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain crouched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
Some memory that had taken flight ;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
And one chance look to thee should turn,
I drink out of an humbler urn
A lowlier pleasure ;
The homely sympathy that heeds
The common life our nature breeds ;
A wisdom fitted to the needs
Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh smitten by the morning ray,
When thou art up, alert and gay,
Then, cheerful flower ! my spirits play
With kindred gladness :
And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
All seasons through, another debt,
Which I, wherever thou art met,
To thee am owing ;
An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
A happy, genial influence,
Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
Nor whither going.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
And cheerful when the day's begun
 As lark or leveret,
Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
Nor be less dear to future men
Than in old time ;—thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favourite.

*TO THE SMALL CELANDINE*¹

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
Let them live upon their praises ;
Long as there's a sun that sets,
Primroses will have their glory ;
Long as there are violets,
They will have a place in story :
There's a flower that shall be mine,
'Tis the little celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
For the finding of a star ;
Up and down the heavens they go,
Men that keep a mighty rout !
I'm as great as they, I trow,
Since the day I found thee out,
Little flower !—I'll make a stir,
Like a great astronomer.

¹ Common pilewort.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Modest, yet withal an elf
Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
Since we needs must first have met
I have seen thee, high and low,
Thirty years or more, and yet
'Twas a face I did not know ;
Thou hast now, go where I may,
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless prodigal ;
Telling tales about the sun,
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !
Travel with the multitude :
Never heed them ; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers ;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home ;
Spring is coming, thou art come !

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming spirit !
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane—there's not a place,

‘ I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD ’

Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
Children of the flaring hours !
Buttercups, that will be seen,
Whether we will see or no ;
Others, too, of lofty mien ;
They have done as worldlings do,
Taken praise that should be thine,
Little, humble celandine !

Prophet of delight and mirth,
Scorned and slighted upon earth ;
Herald of a mighty band,
Of a joyous train ensuing,
Singing at my heart's command,
In the lanes my thoughts pursuing,
I will sing, as doth behove,
Hymns in praise of what I love !

‘ I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD ’

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils ;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :—
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company ;
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat !
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest :
Hail to thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion !
Thou, linnet ! in thy green array,
Presiding spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May ;
 And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment :
A life, a presence like the air,
Scattering thy gladness without care
Too blest with any one to pair ;
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
 Yet seeming still to hover ;
There ! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A brother of the dancing leaves ;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
 Pours forth his song in gushes ;

As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !
For thy song, Lark, is strong ;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary ;
Had I now the wings of a faëry,
Up to thee would I fly.
There's madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine ;
Lift me, guide me high and high
To thy banqueting-place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
Thou art laughing and scorning ;
Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken lark ! thou wouldst be loth
To be such a traveller as I.

Happy, happy liver,
With a soul as strong as a mountain river
Pouring out praise to the Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both !

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

STRAY PLEASURES

*'—Pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find.'*

By their floating mill,
That lies dead and still,
Behold yon prisoners three,
The miller with two dames, on the breast of the
Thames !
The platform is small, but gives room for them all ;
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
To their mill where it floats,
To their house and their mill tethered fast ;
To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile,
They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,
All alive with the fires
Of the Sun going down to his rest,
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,
While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and maidens wheel,
They themselves make the reel,
And their music's a prey which they seize;
It plays not for them,—what matter? 'tis theirs;
And if they had care, it has scattered their cares,
While they dance, crying, 'Long as ye please!'

They dance not for me,
Yet mine is their glee!
Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find;
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth.

The showers of the spring
Rouse the birds, and they sing;
If the wind do but stir for his proper delight,
Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss;
Each wave, one and t' other, speeds after his brother;
They are happy, for that is their right!

TO MY SISTER

WRITTEN AT A SMALL DISTANCE FROM MY HOUSE, AND
SENT BY MY LITTLE BOY

It is the first mild day of March,
Each minute sweeter than before :
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my friend, will date
The opening of the year.

Love, now an universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth:
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than fifty years of reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
—And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

LINES

WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

61

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played ;
Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
But the least motion that they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

From Heaven if this belief be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man ?

TO HARTLEY COLERIDGE

SIX YEARS OLD

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;

Thou faëry voyager ! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do makè one imagery ;
O blessed vision ! happy child !
That art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
But when she sate within the touch of thee.
O too industrious folly !
O vain and causeless melancholy !
Nature will either end thee quite ;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
What hast thou to do with sorrow,
Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks ;
Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
A gem that glitters while it lives,
And no forewarning gives ;
But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
Slips in a moment out of life.

'O NIGHTINGALE, THOU SURELY ART'

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art
A creature of a fiery heart ;—
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
Had helped thee to a valentine ;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night ;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves.

I heard a stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day ;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze :
He did not cease ; but cooed—and cooed ;
And somewhat pensively he wooed :
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending ;
Of serious faith, and inward glee ;
That was the song—the song for me !

LUCY

I

STRANGE fits of passion have I known :
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befel.

When she I loved was strong and gay,
And like a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath the evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea ;
My horse trudged on—and we drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard plot ;
And, as we climbed the hill,
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot
The moon descended still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped :
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head !—
'O mercy !' to myself I cried,
'If Lucy should be dead !'

II

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

'Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

'She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

'The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

'The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear

In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

'And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

III

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love:

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me !

IV

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees,
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

V

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England ! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played ;
And thine is too the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

Ram Sradish Dewochi.

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE new-comer ! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice ?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear ;
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird : but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to ; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.

TO A SKY-LARK

69

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faëry place ;
That is fit home for thee !

TO A SKY-LARK

ETHEREAL minstrel ! Pilgrim of the sky !
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler ! that love-prompted strain,
('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain :
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
A privacy of glorious light is thine ;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home !

'SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT'

SHE was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ;
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn ;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too !
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty ;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food ;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

71

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine ;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command ;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

(AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND)

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these grey rocks ; this household lawn ;
These trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water, that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode ;
In truth together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep !

Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart :
God shield thee to thy latest years !
Thee neither know I nor thy peers ;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away :
For never saw I mien, or face,
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered like a random seed,
Remote from men, thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress,
And maidenly shamefacedness :
Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
The freedom of a mountaineer :

A face with gladness overspread !
Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
And seemliness complete, that sways
Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
With no restraint, but such as springs
From quick and eager visitings
Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
Of thy few words of English speech :
A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
That gives thy gestures grace and life !
So have I, not unmoved in mind,
Seen birds of tempest-loving kind,
Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland
For thee who art so beautiful?
O happy pleasure! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell;
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A shepherd, thou a shepherdess!
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality:
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea: and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see!
Thy elder brother I would be,
Thy father, anything to thee!

Now thanks to Heaven! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had; and going hence
I bear away my recompence.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our memory, feel that she hath eyes:
Then, why should I be loth to stir?
I feel this place was made for her;
To give new pleasure like the past,
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part;
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall;
And thee, the spirit of them all!

STEPPING WESTWARD

While my fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Katrine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a hut where in the course of our tour we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, 'What, you are stepping westward?'

'*What, you are stepping westward?*'—'Yea.'
—'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,

If we, who thus together roam
In a strange land, and far from home,
Were in this place the guests of chance:
Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
Though home or shelter he had none,
With such a sky to lead him on?

The dewy ground was dark and cold;
Behind, all gloomy to behold;
And stepping westward seemed to be
A kind of *heavenly* destiny:
I liked the greeting; 'twas a sound
Of something without place or bound;
And seemed to give me spiritual right
To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
Was walking by her native lake:
The salutation had to me
The very sound of courtesy:

THE SOLITARY REAPER

75

Its power was felt; and while my eye
Was fixed upon the glowing sky,
The echo of the voice enwrought
A human sweetness with the thought
Of travelling through the world that lay
Before me in my endless way.

THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts, and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
So sweetly to reposing bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:

Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again!

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened till I had my fill,
And when I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS

1803

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold:
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off weight—nor press on weight!—away
Dark thoughts!—they came, but not to stay;
With chastened feelings would I pay
 The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius 'glinted' forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now? —
Full soon the aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

Well might I mourn that he was gone,
Whose light I hail'd when first it shone,
When, breaking forth as nature's own,
 It showed my youth
How verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends,—

Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
By Skiddaw seen,—
Neighbours we were, and loving friends
We might have been :

True friends though diversely inclined ;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou ' poor Inhabitant below,'¹
At this dread moment—even so—
Might we together
Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast !
But why go on ?—
Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a son, his joy and pride,
(Not three weeks past the stripling died,)
Lies gathered to his father's side.
Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
Some sad delight.

¹ A quotation from one of Burns' poems.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distrest ;
And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for thee, by pitying grace
Checked oft-times in a devious race,
May He, who halloweth the place
 Where man is laid,
Receive thy spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
Night fell, I heard, or seemed to hear,
Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought :
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright :

Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to
learn ;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care ;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice ;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more ; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He fixes good on good alone, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means ; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;

Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired ;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
—He who though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;
Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one

Where what he most doth value must be won :
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast :
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must go to dust without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
This is the happy Warrior ; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

*SONNETS**I.—THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION
OF SWITZERLAND*

Two voices are there ; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains ; each a mighty voice :
In both from age to age Thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
Thou from the Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.

SONNETS

Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left
For, high-souled maid, what sorrow would it be
That mountain floods should thunder as before
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful voice be heard by thee !

II.—WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1802

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, coo
Or groom !—We must run glittering like a broo
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
The wealthiest man among us is the best :
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no more :
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

III

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !

This sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
For this, for every thing, we are out of tune ;
It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

IV.—LONDON, 1802

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart :
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

V

It is not to be thought of that the flood
Of British freedom, which to the open sea
Of the world's praise from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'
Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
That this most famous stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible knights of old:
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

VI

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my Country!—am I to be blamed?
But when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;

And I by my affection was beguiled :
What wonder if a poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

VII.—PERSONAL TALK

I AM not one who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk,
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight :
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like forms with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

VIII.—CONTINUED

WINGS have we,—and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.

Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear ;
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—
The gentle lady married to the Moor ;
And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

IX.—CONCLUDED

NOR can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought :
And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

X.—COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS

1802

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
The gentleness of heaven is on the sea :
Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
Dear child ! dear girl ! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

XI

WHERE lies the land to which yon ship must go ?
Festively she puts forth in trim array ;
As vigorous as a lark at break of day ;
Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?
What boots the inquiry ?—Neither friend nor foe
She cares for ; let her travel where she may,
She finds familiar names, a beaten way
Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?

And, almost as it was when ships were rare
(From time to time, like pilgrims, here and there
Crossing the waters), doubt, and something dark,
Of the old sea some reverential fear,
Is with me at thy farewell, joyous bark !

XII.—COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

SEPT. 3, 1803

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill ;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

XIII.—INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,

CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal saint with vain expense,
• With ill-matched aims the architect who planned,
Albeit labouring for a scanty band
Of white-robed scholars only, this immense

And glorious work of fine intelligence !
Give all thou canst ; high Heaven rejects the lore
Of nicely-calculated less or more ;
So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells,
Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die ;
Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

XIV.—CONTINUED

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here ;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam ;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold ; where the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops :—or let my path
Lead to that younger pile, whose sky-like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
Infinity's embrace ; whose guardian crest,
The silent cross, among the stars shall spread
As now, when she hath also seen her breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
Of grateful England's overflowing dead.

TINTERN ABBEY

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON
REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR

JULY 13, 1798

FIVE years have past ; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters ! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.¹—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
Among the woods and copses, nor disturb
The wild green landscape. Once again I see
These hedgerows, hardly hedgerows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,

¹ The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
The hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,

TINTERN ABBEY

9.

In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led : more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. I cannot paint—
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite ; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,

By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more

Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
Of this fair river ; thou, my dearest friend,
My dear, dear friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear sister ! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy : for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee : and in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts

Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together ; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service : rather say
With warmer love, oh ! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

APPENDIX

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH was born at Cockermouth in Cumberland, April 7, 1770, and received his early education at Hawkshead School. At the age of eighteen he was entered at St. John's College, Cambridge, and after having taken his degree he made a tour of France and Switzerland. It was the time of the great Revolution in France, and the young poet was profoundly affected by the stirring events of the period.

After a rather aimless time in London Wordsworth settled with his sister Dorothy at Racedown, in Dorsetshire, where he first met the poet Coleridge, who was then living at Nether Stowey. Shortly afterwards the Wordsworths removed to Alfoxden in order to be nearer to Coleridge; and the two poets in the following year published a joint volume with the title of *Lyrical Ballads*. This contained Coleridge's poem *The Ancient Mariner* and Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, among other pieces chiefly by the latter poet.

Wordsworth spent the winter of 1798-9 in Germany, and on his return he settled with his sister at Grasmere, and began the work which made his name as a poet, drawing inspiration and poetical subject-matter

from the surroundings which his work has made familiar to all readers of English literature.

In 1802 he married, and some years later settled at Rydal Mount, where he lived until his death. He was made distributor of stamps for Westmoreland, and the salary attached to this office enabled him to devote himself to his writing. In 1843 he was appointed poet-laureate, and he held this office up to the date of his death, April 23, 1850, when he was succeeded by Tennyson.

Wordsworth is best known by his shorter poems, some of the finest of which are given in this volume. His longest works, *The Excursion* and *The Prelude*, are seldom read, and indeed they are not among his best productions. Another of his longer poems, *The White Doe of Rylstone*, is, however, a charming tale written in exquisite verse.

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